

Assembly Resolution No. 83

**BY:** M. of A. Errigo

**COMMENDING** Alexander Cichelli upon the occasion of his designation for special recognition after 70 years of dedicated service to the American Legion

**WHEREAS,** It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize that the quality and character of life in the communities across New York State are reflective of the concerned and dedicated efforts of those patriotic organizations and individuals who devote themselves to the welfare of the community and its citizenry; and

**WHEREAS,** Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Alexander Cichelli upon the occasion of his designation for special recognition after 70 years of dedicated service to the American Legion, celebrated at a ceremony in December of 2016; and

**WHEREAS,** For seven decades, Alexander Cichelli has been a vital member of the American Legion; he began his service with the now defunct Post 955 in Retsof, New York, before joining the Carlton R. Boies Post 1007 in Leicester, New York; and

**WHEREAS,** Alexander Cichelli enlisted in the United State Navy as a 21-year-old in 1942, and was one of the first enlistees to be processed through the Samson Naval Training Center in Geneva; and

**WHEREAS,** Alexander Cichelli completed his final training at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center in Chicago before being stationed on the USS Salt Lake City; he quickly rose through the ranks holding the position of Chief Petty Officer; and

**WHEREAS,** Chief Petty Officer Alexander Cichelli saw significant action aboard the USS Salt Lake City in the Pacific Theater during World War II; he was aboard the ship during the Gilbert and Marshall Islands campaign of late 1943 and early 1944, and participated in battles at the Funafuti and Tarawa Atolls in the South Pacific; and

**WHEREAS,** In late 1944, the USS Salt Lake City was an integral part of the Battle of Leyte Gulf which decimated Japan's naval strength; the skirmish is widely recognized as the largest naval battle of the war; and

**WHEREAS,** Chief Petty Officer Alexander Cichelli's most memorable military experience came while the USS Salt Lake City was providing naval support during the Battle of Iwo Jima; and

**WHEREAS,** Chief Petty Officer Alexander Cichelli was in charge of the USS Salt Lake City's machine shop during normal operations but in times of battle, he was stationed to fire control on the ship's main deck; after the initial bombardment of Iwo Jima had concluded, the Salt Lake City and other ships of the fleet patrolled the island while Marines

fought to retake it from the Japanese; and

**WHEREAS,** It was from that vantage point on the main deck and using binoculars that Chief Petty Officer Cichelli and other shipmates were able to see six Marines raise the American flag atop Mount Suribachi on February 23, 1945; that image became iconic and served as the inspiration of the Marine Corps War Memorial in Arlington, Virginia; and

**WHEREAS,** After his honorable discharge in 1946, Alexander Cichelli returned to his hometown of Retsof, and went back to work at the International Salt Company; for the last 10 years of his career, he held the title of Plant Manager, a position from which he retired in 1986; and

**WHEREAS,** Alexander Cichelli married his high school sweetheart, Carmel DiCarlo, and together, the couple raised two sons; after 54 years of marriage, Carmel passed away and Alexander moved to Leicester with his son; and

**WHEREAS,** For 70 years, Alexander Cichelli has distinguished himself in service to his country and his community; it is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize the significance of his contributions and to note his worthy endeavors which have earned the recognition and applause of all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED,** That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Alexander Cichelli upon the occasion of his designation for special recognition after 70 years of dedicated service to the American Legion; and be it further

**RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Alexander Cichelli.